



## Financial Counselling Tidbit

November 2010

### Housing NSW to write off old debts

In November 2009, Housing NSW launched their 'vacated debt project', sending out letters of demand to tenants who had an alleged debt from a previous tenancy. These letters were followed up with threats of eviction unless the tenants started paying these "debts." No particulars were given in the letters and when tenants contacted their client service officers (CSOs), many CSOs couldn't tell tenants when and how these alleged debts had been incurred.

Our tenancy service lodged a complaint with the NSW Ombudsman, who investigated the matter. As a result Housing NSW agreed to the following:

- All CSOs are instructed to give particulars to tenants about alleged debts;
- CSOs are authorised to write off any debts older than 6 years up to \$10,000;
- Any debt older than 6 years and over \$10,000 will be referred to the General Manager to authorise it to be written off; and
- Future letters of demand will give the particulars of the alleged debt, as well as information on how tenants may contest it.

**For further information:** you can contact Phoenix on 9698 7277 or [phoenix@rlc.org.au](mailto:phoenix@rlc.org.au).

If you would like this emailed instead of posted, or to be taken off the mailing list then please email [Elizabeth@rlc.org.au](mailto:Elizabeth@rlc.org.au).

If you know of other financial counsellors we might have missed on the mail out, please encourage them to contact us for future editions.